Shareware Solutions II

An Exciting Apple II Journey Into The Future

Volume 1, Issue 6 **July, 1994**

From The Publisher's Desktop

For nearly 17 years, the slogan "Apple II Forever" has served our community very well. Many of us still believe in the power of those magic words and intend to use our Apple II systems for many years to come. After all, the Apple II computer is a fun system to operate, and with a myriad of software titles and hardware add-ons available, there's very little that the Apple II cannot do. Perhaps, though, the time has come for us to change the slogan that ties us together? In the mid-1990s, a much more appropriate and realistic slogan would be, "Support those who support the Apple II."

1994 has been a very difficult year for those who produce and sell Apple II products. Numerous Apple II companies are seeing a precipitous slow down in sales, and several long-time Apple II companies have recently gone out of business. As the year began, it was simply inconceivable that a corporation like Applied Engineering would fall on hard times, but they did and closed their doors. TMS Peripherals, a mail order company specializing in low cost high capacity hard disk drives also closed their doors. CV Technologies, the company that designed and marketed the high speed Apple II RamFAST SCSI interface card was forced to close their doors. Econ Technology, a company that produced both Apple II hardware and software, also fell on hard times and decided to leave the Apple II arena for what they consider to be the "greener pastures" of the Macintosh market.

The two biggest shocks of all came recently when Quality Computers announced the discontinuation of the AppleWorksGS update project, and when Big Red Computer Club announced that they too would be closing their doors by the end of this year. Big Red has been involved with the Apple II for more than 12 years, and has held on in the marketplace just as long as they possibly could before making the decision to wind down their business.

Our current situation is not as bad as it may at first seem to be. Big Red is actively seeking to develop partnerships so that their products can be supported after Big Red ceases to exist. Sequential Systems has purchased the rights to the RamFAST, and will continue to update it and market it. Alltech Electronics has purchased the rights to Econ's SoundMeister stereo digitizing card and will continue to market it. GS+ Magazine purchased the rights to Econ's AutoArk and Addressed For Success, and has already released an update for Addressed For Success. So, it's not as if we in the Apple II community are being left high and dry with no resources for new products.

Every company that remains active in the Apple II marketplace, including Alltech Electronics, Charlie's AppleSeeds, GS+, NAUG, Parson's Engineering, Quality Computers, Resource Central, Seven Hills, Sequential Systems, Softdisk Publishing, Vitesse, WestCode Software, and numerous other smaller companies, need your support more than they have ever needed it before. They all desperately need your help if they are going to stay healthy and survive, and continue to produce new Apple II hardware and software.

Help and support can best be offered by Apple II users with their wallets. Think of it this way: each product purchased is a vote of confidence. Each purchase of on Apple II product transmits an important message to the producer of the product; it says that you appreciate the company for remaining active in the Apple II marketplace, and it says that you support those who support the Apple II.

If there's a product you've been thinking about purchasing, now is as good a time as any to make that purchase. If you've been thinking about sending in a shareware fee for a program you love, take a few minutes and just do it!

At this juncture, it is critical that the remaining Apple II companies hear your message of support, and they need to hear it loudly and clearly! They need your help more than ever if they are going to continue to support the "Apple II Forever."

Grapevine

Shareware Solutions II

Volume 1, Issue 6

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Make all checks or money orders out to Joe Kohn. US Funds Only. Sorry, but no charge cards, purchase orders or COD orders will be accepted.

This newsletter was created entirely with an Apple IIGS. All articles written in AppleWorks v3.0. Page Layout prepared in AppleWorks GS. Printing was done on a Hewlett-Packard LaserJet IIP Plus, connected to the IIGS courtesy of Vitesse's Harmonie. The use of TrueType fonts is courtesy of WestCode Software's Pointless.

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Low Cost IIGS Enhancement

Although the "S" in GS stands for sound, unless you have a pair of external speakers connected to your computer, you're missing out on some of the best that the IIGS has to offer.

You can't connect just any pair of external speakers to your IIGS. The ones you can connect contain their own amplifier, and are often called "powered speakers." A few years ago, a good set of powered speakers could have set you back $200, but now you can buy a pair starting at just $15.

The GS uses the exact same type of speakers as you'd use with a Walkman style cassette player. You can find them at any large consumer electronics store such as Circuit City or The Good Guys, or for that matter, they can even be found at large drug stores or K–Mart. Most stores that sell Walkman portables also stock powered speakers.

As with many consumer goods, you get what you pay for. The more money you spend, the higher quality speaker you'll get. But, even the $15 variety of speaker is going to result in much better sound than you're used to hearing from the IIGS built-in speaker.

Whether you use lots of digitized sounds, enjoy IIGS music programs, or just like playing games, having a pair of external powered speakers will breathe new life into your IIGS. Once you have a pair of speakers connected to your IIGS, you'll wonder how you got along without them before.

Installing external speakers is a 2 step process that takes no more than a few minutes to complete. Located on the back of the IIGS is a plug for a standard RCA Jack. Plug the speakers' RCA Jack into the RCA plug on the back of the IIGS. Plug in the power cord to any nearby power outlet. Lastly, start up your favorite IIGS music program, and be ready to be amazed!

Easter Eggs

Lots of hidden features abound in Apple II software programs. This month's crop of Easter Eggs are found in Apple IIGS programs and they have been reported by a number of different people.

Bright Software, the Swiss company that has produced both games and productivity software, seems to relish hiding Easter Eggs in their programs. Recently, Apple IIGS programmer Nathan Mates was poking around in Space Fox, and discovered that if he typed the word "gemini" right after the main screen appears, then started a new game and pushed the Tab key while playing, it would be next to impossible to die.

In an attempt to validate that this hidden feature did indeed work, I contacted the author of Space Fox, Henrik Gudat, and he confirmed that it did work exactly as reported by Nathan.

Henrik then informed me of several Easter Eggs that exist in his sophisticated Symbolix math program. After looking through the Easter Eggs, I'm convinced that if Henrik ever decided to give up computer programming, he'd have a long and successful career as a stand up comedian.

In both the demo version of

Symbolix and in the full program, there's a built-in help system that can be accessed from the Apple Pull Down Menu. Unbeknownst to most, if you type the word "help" anywhere in the program, you'll be treated to a hilarious display of Henrik's wit. Screen after screen display Henrik's version of Murphy's Laws.

A sampling of those laws include: "The IIGS is not slow; you are thinking too fast." "Symbolix's lifetime warranty has just expired." "Be prepared for thousands of inquiries after you decide to discontinue a product." "Virtual reality is one way to admit that you can't manage reality" and "If you can't manage reality, don't take drugs. Become a programmer."

Another example of Henrik Gudat's wit can be found under the Apple Pull Down Menu. If you access the menu option "About Symbolix", you'll see a scanned photograph of the programmers involved with Bright Software. If you click on the photo's background, you'll see a screen that displays the credits. However, if you hold down the Open–Apple key while clicking on the photo's background, you'll see another credit screen that lists the members of Bright Software's supposed Marketing Department. That three member department is composed of "J. Kohn, C. Field and S. Disbrow"; all are US based writers who penned favorable reviews of Symbolix.

Bright Software's freeware word processing New Desk Accessory program – Shadow Write – contains an interesting Easter Egg that was discovered by Harold Hislop. While examining Shadow Write's code, Harold discovered some extraneous lines of code, and posted a message on GEnie's A2 RoundTable that alerted the rest of us to a possible Easter Egg. In short order, Tony Ward discovered how to activate it. He found that if you go to the Apple Pull Down Menu and access "About ShadowWrite," a window will appear that displays credits. If you hold down the Control, Option and Open–Apple keys, and click on the "More Info" button, you'll be treated to an alternate animated message that displays other credits.

Some Easter Eggs are actually functional. Greg Templeman, a programmer for Softdisk G–S, recently posted a message on GEnie's A2 Round Table that said, "Back when I worked at Claris, I beat the programmers over the heads with lead pipes until Tom Hoke put an Easter Egg into the DB module: if you press Open–Apple–Option–H in any AWGS DataBase document, it toggles a mode in which the Enter key works the same as the Return key (i.e. it does whatever you've configured it to do). You have to (temporarily) set Keyboard Translation to None (using the NDA based Control Panel's General option) in order for the Open–Apple-Option–H keypresses to be recognized; don't forget to set it back to Standard when you're done. This attribute gets saved with the document, so you only have to do it once on a document to keep that behavior."

Bob Neuman discovered a grand total of nine Easter Eggs in Broderbund's Print Shop GS Companion. After starting up the program, Bob reports that if you click on the various letters that spell out "Companion" at the top of the main menu screen, each letter activates a different Easter Egg. Many of those Easter Eggs display constantly changing kinetic animations, but there's one that determines all the prime factors for any number you enter, and one that contains an anti-piracy message. Be aware that the area you need to click on is quite small, so if nothing happens, move your mouse slightly, and try again.

Philippe Benichou reports that there is an Easter Egg in Broderbund's Print Shop GS. If you hold down either the Option or the Open–Apple key while selecting the main menu item "Exit Program," you'll be magically transported to La La Land, and a new menu appears. When you choose items from the La La Land menu, you'll see scanned photographs of the design team that developed the program. If you point your mouse at the various people's heads, you'll see their names.

Addressed For Success

Within days of acquiring the rights to the IIGS desktop based address data base and labeling program, Addressed For Success, GS+ Magazine issued an update to the program that corrects several problems that existed with the initial Econ release. Most notably, Addressed For Success can now properly import data from AppleWorks v3.0 and 4.0.x databases.

GS+ is making that update available to current owners of Addressed For Success for only $5. In order to take advantage of that upgrade, you will need to contact GS+ Magazine and supply them with the serial number that appears on the disk label.

If you don't already own Addressed For Success, you'll be pleased to learn that the retail price has dropped from $49.95 to only $35. That price includes first class shipping to anywhere in the United States, Air Mail shipping to Canada or Mexico, or surface mail shipping to anywhere else in the world. (For Air Mail delivery outside North America, you'll need to add $3, for a total of $38.)

To order Addressed For Success v1.1, or to upgrade from the earlier version, give the fine folks at GS+ a call at 1-800-662-3634 between 9AM and 5PM (Eastern time), Monday through Friday. Outside the United States, you can call 615-843-3988. GS+ accepts Visa and MasterCard for all phone orders. If you prefer to order by mail, send your check or money order (in US funds only, made payable to "EGO Systems"), or credit card information to:

Addressed For Success
EGO Systems
P. O. Box 15366
Chattanooga, TN 37415-0366

CD–ROM on The IIGS

Sequential Systems has given the Apple IIGS owner 20 good reasons to purchase a CD–ROM player, and they are soon going to be giving us even more incentive to connect a CD–ROM player to the IIGS.

In late 1993, Jawaid Bazyar stunned the Apple IIGS world when he announced that he'd completed work on Sequential's discQuest software package. That software serves as a IIGS "front end" for CD–ROM disks that follow the DiskPassage standard. Using discQuest, it's now possible to access voluminous amounts of text, view color graphics, and listen to digitized sounds that are contained on the purported Mac and PC only DiskPassage disks. What Jawaid was able to accomplish was nothing short of miraculous!

Jawaid offers an explanation of just how he was able to implement discQuest to retrieve information from Macintosh and PC CD–ROM disks:

"There are two main databases on a DiskPassage CD: the Index database and the Menu database. The "Browse" menu information that appears in discQuest is taken from the menu database, and the "Search" window accesses the Index database for its hyper–fast search capability. There can be many index sets, depending on the CD. Each set has at least an index for article titles, and an index for every word in every article. How the search is so fast is a trade secret. Some time ago I devised a similar system (very similar) for hypothetical use on CD–ROMs. I missed the one optimization that makes the DiskPassage searches so fast; but I know it now. So, in a nutshell, discQuest manipulates these databases to make the seeming magic of multimedia. Now we just need an encyclopedia, and we're set."

The discQuest software ships with a CD–ROM named "The Family Doctor," which is, in essence, a medical encyclopedia contained on a single disk. It contains information on nearly 2,000 ailments.

Other CD–ROM titles that are currently supported by discQuest and available from Sequential Systems include:

"Darwin Multimedia" – a disk that contains the complete text and original illustrations of the final editions of "The Voyage of the Beagle," "The Origin of Species," and "The Descent of Man." There is also an 1859 manuscript that outlines the theory of evolution, a Darwin Timeline detailing significant events in his life, a bibliography of over 1000 primary and secondary references, original maps from the voyages of the HMS Beagle and HMS Adventure, and more than 650 color and black and white graphic images.

"Monarch Notes" – a disk edition of the Monarch Notes series which includes the complete text of the entire collection!

"Sherlock Holmes on disc!" – a disk that contains the complete text of all of the Sherlock Holmes novels by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

"Shakespeare" – a disk that contains the complete works of William Shakespeare, including plays, poems and sonnets in both American and Queen's English versions.

"Parenting" – a disk that contains answers to the many questions asked by parents and would-be parents. It covers everything from fertility, problem pregnancies, and childbirth to the milestones of child development from birth through age five.

"Multimedia Audubon's Birds" – a disk that contains the complete text of the 1840 first edition "Octavo" set of John James Audubon's "Birds of America." It includes 500 full color bird lithographs, and CD quality bird calls for many birds.

Additionally, there are CD-ROM disks available from Sequential that are devoted to literature, baseball and both world and United States history. As impressive as the first 20 titles in the discQuest series are, a long awaited encyclopedia will be available from Sequential by the time you read this. Jawaid has been hard at work, and has recently created discQuest II – a "front end" IIGS application that will allow us to access the PC Windows' 1994 version of the Compton's New Century Encyclopedia.

That encyclopedia on disk contains 38,000 articles in 6,000 different categories. As well as containing textual information, there are more than 7,000 graphics and hundreds of different digitized audio clips. Try to imagine a complete 20 volume encyclopedia on a single disk; that's Comptons!

As this issue of Shareware Solutions II goes to press, finalized pricing information was not yet available. So, please contact Sequential directly. Also, since there's simply not room here to describe all of the different CD–ROM disks that work with discQuest, request a brochure of available titles. And, if you don't yet own a CD–ROM player or a SCSI interface card, keep in mind that Sequential would be happy to sell you a complete package to get your IIGS up and running with the exciting new CD–ROM technology that is sweeping the computer world. For additional information, contact:

Sequential Systems
1200 Diamond Circle
Lafayette, CO 80025
303-666-4549
800-759-4549

The BlueDisk

A recent unconfirmed rumor states that Apple no longer manufactures the 3.5" SuperDrive or the SuperDrive Controller Card. Those disk drives and interface cards may still be available for quite a while from mail order companies, but a company from Germany has an alternative for those who own Enhanced Apple IIe and IIGS computers.

Joachim Lange has developed the BlueDisk controller card and after more than six months of compatibility testing has just made the BlueDisk available to the general public. The compatibility testing was actually conducted by many people who decided to take a chance and purchased the interface card while it was still in its prerelease phase. Their praise for the BlueDisk card is unanimous and unconditional.

The BlueDisk is a universal floppy disk drive controller card for use with the inexpensive MFM floppy disk drives that are the standard in the IBM and PC world. The BlueDisk supports both 3.5" and 5.25" drives and generic disk drives for the IBM can be found starting for as little as $35. The BlueDisk supports and works with various capacity disk drives, including those that are 360K, 720K, 800K, 1.2meg, 1.44meg, 1.6meg and 2.88meg. The BlueDisk also allows any of the MFM disk drives to work directly with the PCTransporter.

Offered with a one year limited warranty on parts and labor, and with a 30 day money back guarantee, the BlueDisk package includes the interface card, a manual, a utilities disk which contains a GS/OS Driver, GS/OS Driver Installer script, Drive Installation Tester, a special BlueDisk ProDOS-8 Formatter, a read and write diagnostic program, and a special copy of the widely praised MS–DOS Utilities programs from Peter Watson that allows data to be written to MS–DOS formatted disks. Although the MS–DOS Utilities are shareware, you will not be required to submit a separate shareware fee for use of this program; that fee has been factored into the cost of the BlueDisk.

The BlueDisk controller card is currently available only from the German manufacturer; hopefully, that will change at some point. The pricing in US dollars is $139 plus $14 for air mail shipping. Canadians need to send $19 for air mail shipping. Pricing for European and German orders is DM 225 plus DM 18 for shipping. Please be aware that the US rate is subject to change, as the US dollar seems to be fluctuating these days.

All orders for the BlueDisk must be prepaid. Payment can be made by cash, check, travellers check or money order (in US or German currency) and payment via the post office. If payment is not by cash, an additional fee of US $12 (DM 20) is required for each order. Make all checks payable to Joachim Lange, SHH Systeme.

If you have a modem, you can contact Mr Lange by e–mail at j.lange@genie.geis.com. If you don't have a modem, contact:

///SHH SYSTEME
Dipl. Ing. Joachim Lange
Bergstrasse 95
82131 Stockdorf
Germany

New HP DeskJet Printers

Hewlett–Packard recently withdrew the popular DeskJet 500 and 550c models of inkjet printers, and replaced them with the 520 and 560c models. The new models sport the same prices, with the black and white 520 being available for less than $300, and the color 560c costing less than $600.

There's both good news and bad news about using the next generation HP DeskJet with an Apple II computer. The good news is that these printers output documents at 600 x 300 DPI (dots per inch). Older Deskjet models were limited to 300 x 300 DPI resolution.

The bad news isn't really bad news at all, in fact, it's a blessing in disguise. Previous HP DeskJet printers contained both a parallel and serial connection. To physically connect a serial printer to an Apple IIGS, all that was required was a $15 cable. The newest models, however, no longer have that serial connection, so there is an added expense of $70–$100 for a parallel interface card. If you believe that "time is money," you'll actually save a bundle; a parallel printer is nearly four times faster than a serial printer.

In a related development, Vitesse has just released an updated Harmonie v2.1.1 that provides GS/OS printer drivers for these new printers, allowing them to be "plug and print" on the Apple IIGS. For additional information about Harmonie, contact Vitesse, or any Apple II mail order company.

Vitesse
PO Box 929
La Puente, CA 91747-0929
818-813-1270
800-777-7344

Correction

In the last issue, an older and out of date E–mail address was listed for Mike Westerfield of The Byte Works. His current address is MikeW50@aol.com.

In addition to the new Byte Works' programming products outlined in the last issue, they are getting ready to release a new IIGS spreadsheet program — Quick Click Calc. Contact Byte Works, and they will be happy to mail you a brochure describing their latest offerings. For additional information, contact:

Byte Works, Inc.
4700 Irving Blvd. NW, Ste. 207
Albuquerque, NM 87114
505-898-8183

A Day In The Life

Turn On, Tune In, Link Up

Many people must have been very skeptical after reading the overly dramatic description and praise of Lynx in the last issue. For those who currently have access to the Internet, you already know that it wasn't an exaggeration. After all, you're already turning on your computer, tuning in to the Internet, and linking up to the exhilarating and exciting world of international information exchange that is made possible by Lynx.

Lynx is an easy to use Internet search and retrieval tool that is officially described as a "browser for the World Wide Web." Until very recently, information on the Internet wasn't always easy to find as it is spread out across thousands of different computer systems worldwide. But, as each day goes by, more and more information is being made available to Internet users via the World Wide Web. In an effort to convince the rest of you of the wonders that exist on that system, following are short descriptions of many of the new sites added to the Internet's World Wide Web on just a single day in mid-June, 1994.

On June 15th, The National Library of Medicine opened up electronic access to all of the library's on-line database services which include, among other things, several multimedia exhibits from the History of Medicine Division and the Web's first large cataloged medical image collection containing nearly 60,000 images.

On that same day, the Canadian Himalayan Expeditions Web Center went online, offering adventure trips to Nepal, Africa, India, Pakistan, and South East Asia. Additionally, poetry and woodcuts about, or inspired by, malt liquor became available by the Malt Liquor Mantra Society.

On that day, a Computer Music Journal was added to the web, as was Birding on the Web, a resource for bird watchers. Also, a collection of publications and items of economic interest from The Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia became part of the

Web, and an easy to use Freenet Home Page, providing access to all the various Freenets, also joined the Web.

The Electric Power Research Institute joined the Web and now provides collaborative research and development materials on behalf of the nation's electric power industry. The Statistics Department at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School went active with CompStat, and the Duke University Medical Center went public on the Web. The Hang Gliding Picture Server went live with hang gliding and para gliding related material.

The UCI Bookstore and Moon Publications went live with an experimental hypertext travel guide, J.D. Bisignani's Big Island of Hawaii, which allows the reader to explore Hawaii through text, images and audio.

Forget the cost of flying to the Big Apple, renting a limousine, donning a tuxedo, and fighting traffic to visit an exclusive art gallery. As of June 15th, you can skip the trip, uncork the wine, invite some friends to view an exhibition, and appreciate high quality art electronically over the Internet. The Electric Gallery went live with an exclusive collection of original native Haitian paintings for view and sale.

On June 15th, Internet users could start hanging out at the Anecdote, a club located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The relaxed, intimate atmosphere serves as an open forum for artists of all types. Now the world can see the art hanging on the walls of the gallery, hear the music being played on the stage, and experience a very unique scene.

On that day, you could start learning all about the ancient art of beekeeping from the Beekeeper's Home Page. For Northern California users, a San Francisco Bay Area Transit Information page was activated and two new astronomy and space sciences databases were offered by the Centre de Donnees Astronomiques de Strasbourg.

On that day, The Doomsday Brunette became the Internet's first Web browsable, downloadable, interactive, science fiction, humorous, satirical, mystery electronic book. Additionally, the Department of Biophysics at the Boston University School of Medicine, and the Department of Biochemistry and Cell Biology at Rice University joined the Web.

The File Room went live with an illustrated archive of cases of cultural censorship. Bubonicon 26, New Mexico's annual science fiction convention, went online. The Institute for Molecular Virology at the University of Wisconsin started providing computer-generated images and animations of viruses, topographical maps, digitized electron micrographs of viruses and tutorial information on selected topics in virology. The Free Real Estate Listing Service at Westcoast Interchange started providing real estate listings to over 1100 towns and cities.

On June 15th alone, so many new resources were added to the HyperText–based World Wide Web that it took the equivalent of 55 pages to describe all of them! If you currently have access to the Internet, you too can travel the world and partake of the wonders and glories that exist on the World Wide Web; just issue the lynx command, or use telnet to connect to hnsource.cc.ukans.edu and log in as www.

Using Lynx

Although Lynx already presents a very user friendly menu driven system to retrieve information from the Internet, it also provides a way for Lynx users to easily set up their own customized hypertext menus. By setting up and using Lynx's bookmark files, it's easier than ever to navigate the highways and byways of cyberspace.

Your bookmark file is a standard ASCII text file that is stored in your home directory. The bookmark file contains Uniform Resource Locator (URL) data. A URL contains two parts; the first part contains the type of resource being accessed, and the second part contains an Internet address.

Fortunately, to use a bookmark file, you don't really need to understand anything about URLs or UNIX or pathnames or Internet domain addresses. Whenever you are using Lynx and you find a site that you like and that you'd like to return to, simply press the "A" key, and the site you're currently visiting will be added to your bookmark file. Then, on subsequent Lynx sessions, you can just press the "V" key to view the contents of your bookmark file. The contents will be displayed on-screen, and you can choose where to go by using your arrow keys. You can easily set up a bookmark file; just follow these steps:

1) When using Lynx, press "O" to access the options menu.
2) Press "B" and enter any name for your bookmark file.

Make sure that you add to your bookmark file the Web's first Apple II Home Page, created and made available by Toronto resident Brian Tao. Although still under construction and growing daily, Brian's URL is: http://www.io.org/computers/apple2/

The simplest way to add Brian's Apple II Home Page to your bookmark file is to run Lynx, and press "G". You'll then be prompted to enter a URL, and enter Brian's exactly as it appears above. Once you've arrived at his Apple II Home Page, simply press "A" to automatically add it to your customized Lynx menu. Then, whenever you want to return, just press "V" and choose it from your own Lynx bookmark menu.

Low Cost Internet Access

There are two rapidly expanding San Francisco Bay Area based Internet Service Providers who charge a flat–rate of less than $18 per month for unlimited and complete access to the Internet. Both Netcom (1-800-501-8649) and CRL (415-837-5300) provide 24 hour/day dial up shell access at speeds of up to 14.4 bps, and both are expanding into various parts of the country, allowing greater access to the Internet with a local phone call.

Netcom is currently accessible to modem owners in California, Colorado, Georgia, New York, Massachusetts, Oregon, Texas and Washington (both state and DC). CRL is currently accessible to modem owners in Arizona, California, Georgia, Massachusetts, Missouri, New York, and Texas.

If you live in another geographic area, you can find out about other low cost commercial Internet Service Providers in your area by contacting InterNIC at 1-800-444-4345. If no one answers the phone, just leave a message giving your name and address. In a week or two, you'll receive an informational packet that lists all of the US based Internet Service Providers.

Apple II Product News

By Cynthia E. Field, Ph.D.

Summertime and the computin' is easy. Summer's slower pace means you have more time to explore new products like the ones described here. Hard to believe, but the kids will be going back to school soon. Some of these new offerings may be just right for a young person you know or for your classroom while other products can make useful additions to your personal software library.

As a service provided by Shareware Solutions II for its subscribers, Apple II Product News is for information purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement of any product. All prices are for single packages. Lab packs, network licenses, and site licenses may be available. Contact the companies directly for free catalogs or to inquire about preview policies, money back guarantees, and other support services.

Educational Activities, Inc

Dilemma in the Workplace
This is the company's latest addition to its best–selling Dilemma series. Designed for junior high school students to adult learners, the program presents insights into succeeding in the workplace, develops decision-making skills, and increases vocabulary and reading proficiency.
$49.95 per reading level
(4.0-5.4, 5.0-6.4, 6.0-7.4, 7.0-8.4)
$159.00 (complete set)

Educational Activities, Inc.
1937 Grand Avenue
Baldwin, NY 11510
1-800-645-3739 (outside NY)
516-223-4666
516-623-9282 (fax)

Sunburst/Wings for learning

Divide and Conquer
In this code-breaking activity (requires 64K) for grades 4 to 12, letters stand for the numbers 0 to 9. When players open a window to see the dividend, they enter the divisor of their choice. While the computer calculates the quotient and remainder, some numbers are coded for students to "divide and conquer."
$65

Sunburst/Wings for learning
101 Castleton St.
P.O. Box 100
Pleasantville, NY 10570-0100
1-800-321-7511

Office Productivity Software

TimeOut DiskTools v4.0
Douglas Gum recently announced an updated version of TimeOut DiskTools that is compatible with AppleWorks 4. TimeOut File BackUp cuts the time for daily backups in half. Another new feature, designed for IIGS owners who operate in both 8-bit and 16-bit worlds, is "Ignore Hidden Files." This option avoids copying annoying Finder.Data files to your backup disks.
$52.45 (includes $2.50 shipping and handling)

[Such a Deal: Until October 15, 1994, you can purchase TimeOut DiskTools v4.0 directly from the publisher for $37.45, which includes shipping and handling. To take advantage of this special offer, just mention that you subscribe to Shareware Solutions II when you contact the publisher.]

Office Productivity Software
P.O. Box 2132
LaGrange, GA 30241-2132

Troll Associates, Inc.

Let's Learn About Computers
Designed for students in grades K through 2, this program (requires 48K) provides hands-on computer exercises. One activity uses colored blocks to show how addition and subtraction are performed by computers and calculators. Activities comply with NCTM (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) standards.
$39.95

SOS Planet Earth Puzzle Games
The combination of software (requires 48K) and printed materials promotes reading and thinking skills for children in grades 3 to 6. The program includes four colorful paperbacks – Air Scare, Nature in Danger, Power Failure, and Water Squeeze – and four coordinated software disks.
$39.95

Troll First-Start Biographies
You can introduce youngsters in grades 1 through 3 to the idea of biography by teaming up software activities with paperbacks about famous people such as Amelia Earhart, Harriet Tubman, Pocahontas, Christopher Columbus, and Jackie Robinson. This program lets you print activity sheets, biography posters, story circles, and original essays (requires 48K).
$49.95

Troll First-Start Science
Students in grades 1 to 3 apply skills of classification, observation, inference, and communication in activities (requires 48K) that utilize their senses and critical thinking. Students are also introduced to Braille and the American manual (finger spelling) alphabet with which they can make and print their own signs.
$39.95

Troll First-Start Writing
Children in grades K-2 create their own word and picture stories using a rebus-like format. Large type is used for easy reading. Students can animate pictures and print their masterpieces. The program requires 128K.
$29.95

Troll Printmaker: Holiday Fun
Kids and adults alike can create, save, and print pictures with seasonal and holiday themes by choosing from dozens of detailed seasonal and holiday pictures in the program's database. This open-ended product (requires 128K) reinforces basic geometric concepts of shape, size, and pattern.
$39.95

Troll Associates, Inc.
100 Corporate Drive
Mahwah, NJ 07430
1-800-526-5289

Kingwood Micro Software

Texas II on Disk Vol. 8
Texas II, a printed newsletter devoted exclusively to users of AppleWorks 4, provides helpful hints, news, macros, and reviews. Available exclusively to Texas II subscribers, Texas II on Disk contains approximately 750K of additional articles, macros, AppleWorks files, and TimeOut accessories.
Texas II newsletter
$15 per year (6 issues)
$18 per year overseas
Texas II newsletter and Texas II on Disk
$25 per year
$28 per year overseas

Kingwood Micro Software
2018 Oak Dew
San Antonio, TX 78232-5471
210-490-6373

Tom Snyder Productions, Inc

International Inspirer 2.0
This classic geography program (requires 64K) for grades 5 through 12 has been completely updated and comes with all new student map books. Teachers can call for free 30-day trial.
$149.95

The Smithsonian Institution Science in American Life Series:
The Hole in the Sky
Manufactured Molecules
These new interdisciplinary science kits for grades 5 through 8 help students explore the

dynamic relationship between science and society over the past century. The Hole in the Sky is about the ozone layer; Manufactured Molecules is about new chemical materials. Each software program parallels part of the Science in America Life exhibition which opened April 27 at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.
$399.95 each
$699.95 for both kits

Tom Snyder Productions, Inc.
80 Coolidge Hill Road
Watertown, MA 02172-2817
1-800-342-0236

Sound Management

MIDI Buying Guide & Discount Catalog
Ok, so it's not software, but the 10th edition of Sound Management's 237–page catalog is filled with MIDI-based electronic music products and accessories including a generous number of products for Apple II and IIGS users. If you are a marching band director, music administrator, music educator, classroom instructor, or hobbyist, this catalog is a "must have."

Sound Management
P.O. Box 3053
Peabody, MA 01961
1-800-548-4907

Please send announcements of new Apple II software and hardware to Dr. Cynthia E. Field, 60 Border Drive, Wakefield, RI 02879-3802. You may also send press releases via Internet e-mail addressed to cefield@aol.com or fax product information to 401-782-0380.

Such A Deal!

ContactsGS

In a recent phone conversation with "Burger Bill" Heineman, I attempted to get some type of progress report on the Hewlett-Packard printer drivers for Print Shop GS. Perhaps Bill felt bad because he didn't have any progress to report, or perhaps he was just trying to change the subject when he made the most astonishing and unexpected proposal imaginable. Bill offered to transfer the copyrights for ContactsGS to Shareware Solutions II.

I'd been aware of ContactsGS since before it was even published, back when it was titled The Little Black Book. The Little Black Book was re-named ContactsGS after Bill learned that the title was already taken; apparently, that's an electronic address book program for that other computer that Apple manufactures.

ContactsGS has been for sale the past few years by Simplexity Software. Sometime last winter, reports started appearing online from people who had sent checks to Simplexity, but had never received ContactsGS. Fortunately, Simplexity hadn't cashed any of the checks, but nonetheless, it was quite disconcerting to hear of a product that people wanted to purchase, but that they were unable to successfully acquire from the publisher.

As it turned out, the copyright had reverted back to Burger Bill, yet Simplexity failed to inform potential customers of that fact, and ContactsGS just sort of disappeared for a few months. That's about to change, and ContactsGS will soon become available exclusively from Shareware Solutions II.

ContactsGS is a IIGS New Desk Accessory (NDA) rolodex-style name and address database program. Because it's an NDA, it can be accessed from within any standard GS/OS program that displays the Apple Pull Down Menu, such as the Finder, AppleWorksGS, HyperStudio, HyperCardIIGS, and Platinum Paint.

When accessed, ContactsGS displays 10 fields into which data can be entered. In addition to such standard fields for last name, first name, address, city, state, zip code, area code and telephone number, ContactsGS includes 2 Miscellaneous fields that can each contain up to 80 characters.

By being accessible from within other programs, ContactsGS is a very convenient way to store information about your friends, relatives, business colleagues, or customers. Using the search function, ContactsGS can quickly display information about people in your database. There's much more though than initially meets the eye.

If an external Hayes compatible modem is connected to the built-in IIGS modem port, you can have ContactsGS dial a phone

number that is contained in your ContactsGS database, and once a connection is made, you can pick up a phone connected to the modem, and start talking.

ContactsGS greatest strength lies in the fact that its data file can easily be exported into other programs. ContactsGS stores its data file in a format where fields are separated by tabs, and records are separated by a carriage return. Users of AppleWorks Classic should immediately recognize that format, since AppleWorks can import text files using that format, and can automatically recreate an AppleWorks database from the information.

ContactsGS data file can also be loaded into any word processing program, or for that matter, can be directly exported into Addressed For Success, where lovely looking address labels can be generated.

I personally use the AppleWorks database for all my subscriber information, and I find it amazingly convenient to have all the information contained in that database available to me, via ContactsGS, whether I'm using the Page Layout Module of AppleWorks GS or while using HyperCard.

If you use AppleWorks v3.0 or v4.x, you can create an AppleWorks database from your current ContactsGS data file by simply choosing AppleWorks' option to "make a new file for the database" and then loading in your Contacts datafile "from a text (ASCII) file." To export a current AppleWorks' name and address database into a format that ContactsGS recognizes, you simply load your database and press Open-Apple-P. You'd then choose the option to "create a new tables format" and when prompted, you'd choose "from the current record layout." You'll then have the option to choose which fields to export, and when you've decided, you just choose to print the report as "a text file on disk" and then choose the option for "Tabs between categories, Returns between records." The file that's printed to disk can instantly become your ContactsGS datafile.

In an effort to make things even easier for AppleWorks owners, I have commissioned one of the world's leading AppleWorks' experts, Will Nelken, to create TimeOut Modules for both AppleWorks v3.0 and 4.x that will totally automate the process of moving database information back and forth between AppleWorks and ContactsGS. As many of you know, Will Nelken is the Associate Editor of TimeOut-Central, a disk based magazine devoted to AppleWorks and UltraMacros. When looking for assistance, I just decided that it would be best for everyone if I were to get the best there is.

Because of the additional work coordinating this project, and because of the fact that a program manual still needs to be written, it's taken longer than initially anticipated to finalize the re-release of ContactsGS, but work is proceeding and ContactsGS should be ready to go sometime during the month of August.

ContactsGS works with IIGS System 5.0.2 or later. The NDA itself is only 17K in length, and its data file takes up approximately 75K for every 1,000 entries. So, if you were working with a database containing 100 names and addresses, it would require that you have a total of 25K free on your IIGS System (or Startup) Disk.

In anticipation of the reappearance of ContactsGS, it seems only right and proper to make it available to subscribers of Shareware Solutions II via "Such A Deal."

When re-released, ContactsGS' suggested retail price will be $35. However, I would like to extend a special offer to those who have supported Shareware Solutions II. Subscribers will be able to purchase ContactsGS for only $20, plus $3 for priority shipping within the United States, or $5 for air mail shipment anywhere else in the world.

As with all purchases from Shareware Solutions II, please make checks payable, in US Funds only, to Joe Kohn. Checks received prior to the re-release of ContactsGS will be held, and will not be cashed until the finished product is completed and mailed.

GEnie's A2

If you've been reading Shareware Solutions II for the past year, you've read a lot about modems and telecommunications, and have learned that you can generally get timely answers to all of your Apple II related questions by accessing any one of the major online information services.

If you've trusted my judgment so far, you've probably recently purchased a high speed LineLink 144e modem, have been intrigued by the Internet, and maybe have even taken out a subscription to America Online,

CompuServe or GEnie.

If, for whatever reason, you have not ever accessed an online information service, or you are unhappy with the one that you currently use, you just might find that GEnie's Apple II RoundTable's "Such A Deal" offer is too good to pass up.

GEnie is not the oldest of the online networks, nor is it the biggest. But, most Apple II modem owners tend to agree that GEnie's Apple II areas have the friendliest staff imaginable and have the largest and most comprehensive online library of downloadable files (at last count, more than 22,000). Most Apple II modem owners would also probably agree that the A2 RoundTables are the very best place to go to get accurate technical answers to just about any computer related questions they may have. In fact, when your humble publisher has an Apple II question, he asks it on A2, and generally finds a detailed answer within a matter of hours.

On A2, not a day goes by without many people getting lots of valuable assistance. One very active A2 user, Harold Hislop, even provides hardware repairs to fellow A2 users, at absolutely no cost except for return postage. Not a day goes by without A2 users offering great deals on their old hard drives, RAM cards and commercial software. Not a day goes by without new software being uploaded to the library, and not a day goes by without some playful yet friendly joking. If ever there was a community of Apple II owners, their clubhouse is the A2 RoundTable on GEnie.

The names of those actively involved on A2 reads like a list from the Apple II Hall of Fame. The RoundTable itself is presided over by Dean Esmay, formerly an inCider/A+ Contributing Editor, former Editor-In-Chief of Resource Central and Studio City, and currently involved with Softdisk. Dean has been able to find an incredible group to act as helpers and co-sysops, a number of whom now grace the masthead in II Alive. In addition to those on staff, many Apple II companies are represented on GEnie's A2.

It's quite likely that when you ask a technical question on GEnie's A2, it'll be answered by someone who clearly knows the answer. If you ask an AppleWorks related question on A2, chances are that it will be answered by Randy Brandt, the author of AppleWorks v4. If you ask a Macros or UltraMacros related question, Randy himself might supply the answer, or Will Nelken – editor of Time-Out-Central – or Bev Cadieux – publisher of Texas II – might beat Randy to the punch.

Other companies that maintain an active presence on A2 include Add On II, The Byte Works, Charlie's AppleSeeds, DigiSoft, DreamWorld Software, GS+ Magazine, InTrec, Morgan Davis Group, Parkhurst Micro Products, Procyon, Quality Computers, Sequential Systems, Vitesse and WestCode Software.

Every day, literally hundreds of messages are posted on A2. Some messages contain items for sale, while others contain information about new hardware or software. Some messages ask basic questions, while others contain information of interest to "power users." The atmosphere is a friendly one, with lots of give and take. When problems with your computer arise, you can generally describe those problems, and the next time you log back on, there could be pages upon pages of solutions waiting for you. A2 really is one of the best places your modem can take you!

When logging on to GEnie's A2 Round Table for the first time, you may feel a bit overwhelmed. For that reason, make sure that the first thing you do is access the Main Menu item "GEnie Manual For Apple II Users." That online manual will demystify much, and explain to you exactly how A2 is organized.

If you do decide that you want to spend any time on GEnie, the second best thing you can do is choose the Main Menu item "Download An Apple II Automatic Navigator." As described in Issue 1's "Saving Money On GEnie," an off-line message handler will completely automate all the functions available in A2, and save you both time and money. As an example, if you read every single message posted on A2 on any day, it could take you many hours. However, with GEM or Co-Pilot, you'll be able to download all those messages in 10 or 11 minutes, and will then have the luxury of reading all those messages after you've disconnected from GEnie.

With GEM or C0-Pilot, you'll also be able to automate your visits to the A2 software library, send e-mail and visit any number of Round Tables, all quickly and painlessly. These freeware off-line message handlers are extremely easy to use, and will completely insulate you from having to learn the ins and outs of using GEnie.

GEnie charges $8.95 per month, which includes four hours of non-prime time evening access. Additional hours are $3 each, plus any applicable surcharges. But, Dean Esmay was able to convince GEnie management to offer Shareware Solutions II subscribers a special "Such A Deal" offer. By following these instructions, your first month's fee will be waived, and you'll receive an additional six hours of connect time, for a total of 10 hours of non-prime time usage for no fee whatsoever your first month. To take advantage of that generous offer:

1) Set your communications software for half-duplex (local echo) at 300, 1200, or 2400 baud. The recommended communications parameters are 8 data bits, no parity and 1 stop bit (8N1).

2) Dial 1-800-638-8369 toll-free in the US or 1-800-387-8330 in Canada. Upon connection, type HHH (Please note: every time you use GEnie, you need to enter the HHH upon connection)

3) At the U#= prompt, type JOINGENIE and press Return.

4) At the offer code prompt enter DJE524 to get this special offer.

5) You will have to have a major credit card ready. In the US, you may use your checking account number. (There is an additional $2.00 monthly fee for all checking accounts.) In Canada, VISA and MasterCard only.

Once you've established your account on GEnie, just type A2 to attend the Apple II User's area, or A2PRO to attend the Apple II Programmer's area. Once you've entered A2, make sure you stop by Shareware Solutions II Online (Category 28, Topic 4).

Charlie's AppleSeeds

Of all the special "Such A Deal" discount offers made to subscribers of Shareware Solutions II, the most successful ones have been made by Chuck Newby of Charlie's AppleSeeds. That success has been gauged by feedback from subscribers and from Charlie's AppleSeeds.

To date, numerous subscribers have purchased hard disk drives and the ProSel hard disk drive utility software from Charlie's AppleSeeds, and many have reported being extremely happy with their purchases. Most reports have stressed that Chuck Newby, the owner of Charlie's AppleSeeds, has been very informative and helpful, and has gone out of his way to help subscribers determine exactly what hardware configurations would best suit them. All of the subscribers that I've been in touch with have stressed Chuck's knowledge, his honesty, and the reliable low cost hard drives that he is offering.

In numerous e-mail messages from Chuck Newby, I've been able to determine that he is as happy having you as a customer as you are with him as a source for hardware and software. In fact, everyone has benefited so much from the arrangement that Chuck is back to offer you even better deals than before!

As before, Chuck is offering two different types of hard disk drives: internal and external drives for Apple IIe and IIGS computer systems. The Road Runner internal drives are completely self contained and require that you have 2 open and available slots. The Diplomat external hard drives, manufactured by the industry leader Quantum, require that you also purchase a SCSI interface card.

Special "Such A Deal" pricing for the Diplomat series:

85 meg	$159
125 meg	$215
170 meg	$249
270 meg	$309
525 meg	$475

Special "Such A Deal" pricing for the RoadRunner series:

40 meg	$179
80 meg	$219

Chuck Newby tries to keep both Apple's High Speed SCSI card and the RamFast SCSI interface cards in stock, but he has recently reported that his suppliers have been having difficulty securing them, so make sure to ask Chuck about availability prior to purchase. If available, the special "Such A Deal" pricing for the RamFAST SCSI will add $130.00 to the cost of a Diplomat drive.

In his own words, Chuck would like to add: "All drives are Quantum hard disk drives. The Diplomat is about the same size as the Apple Computer 3.5" Disk Drive and the same color. It's built solidly, with an all–aluminum case, with external SCSI ID# Selector, and with two External SCSI ports. A wall adapter power unit and a 3' 25 to 50 pin SCSI data cable are provided. It is your choice of how the drive is partitioned and whether System software should be pre-installed (at no extra cost). All drives are tested prior to shipping. An optional mini-gender changer and cable are

required for the RamFAST on a Roadrunner, and are available for an additional $12.00."

As before, you can get ProSel - the premiere hard drive utility program - installed on the drive. For the IIe version of ProSel, add $28; for the IIGS version of ProSel, add $89.95.

When ordering from Charlie's AppleSeeds, unless otherwise requested, shipping is by UPS. Add $12 per drive to cover Priority (2 day) Mail and insurance. California residents, add 7% for sales tax. Orders over $1,000 are shipped free.

To take advantage of any of these generous offers, just write or phone Chuck Newby (if calling by phone, early evening or weekends are best) and identify yourself as a subscriber of Shareware Solutions II.

Charlie's AppleSeeds
9081 Hadley Place
San Diego, CA 92126-1523
Phone/Fax 619-566-1297

Shareware Solutions IIe/IIc/IIgs

SS II, Volume I

Just a few weeks after the first issue of Shareware Solutions II (SSII) appeared a year ago, subscriber requests for a detailed index started appearing in my electronic mailbox. Many subscribers have since pointed out that with so many different commercial, public domain, freeware and shareware products mentioned in each issue of the newsletter, it soon became difficult to keep track of what appeared when.

Although I was in absolute agreement that a detailed index would be a useful thing to have, I personally wasn't eager about having to create such an index myself, mainly due to the time involved in creating a large index. When the Kula Index arrived by mail several months ago, I finally thought I was off the hook. I was both proud to have Shareware Solutions II included in the Kula Index, and I thought that the Kula Index would meet the needs of those who wanted an index.

But, the requests from subscribers for an index of products kept coming. Most requests were for a detailed index that mentioned every single product in every single issue, and as was pointed out by several people, the Kula Index was an index for articles, not for all the products mentioned in those articles.

The pace of requests really picked up in June when it appeared as if the Shareware Solutions II area on GEnie's A2 RoundTable was transformed into the Index Request Forum. After successfully sidestepping the issue of who would compile the index, a guardian angel appeared in the form of Frank Sweetser from the Boston Computer Society.

Frank had left a message on the Shareware Solutions II area of America Online, requesting an index. Having met Frank at several KansasFest and AppleFest get-togethers, I jokingly hinted to him that if he'd care to create an index, I'd be happy to make it the official Shareware Solutions II Index.

Several weeks later, Frank sent me a completed index for Issues 1 and 2, and I was stunned with the results. Frank's format is loosely based upon the yearly index that used to be included with Resource Central. By using easy to understand shorthand and abbreviations, Frank has been able to fit a lot of information into the index. A typical index entry starts with a name; that name could be the name of a person, a software title, a hardware device or a shareware game. Following the name is a brief description of the item. Following that is a broad based category into which the product fits. That category actually describes whether the product is available from Shareware Solutions II, as is the case with shareware and freeware, or whether it's available to subscribers at a discount, as is the case with products available through "Such A Deal." Finally, the issue number and page number where the product was written about rounds out each index entry.

Originally, I'd hoped to be able to use small print and list the index on one or two pages of the newsletter; however, that's not going to be possible. The size of the index file for just the first two issues was a staggering 31K. It's anticipated, then, that the index for the first year's newsletters would be 100K. That's enormous, considering each issue of the newsletter

contains text files that add up to 90K.

But, the size of the index makes it the perfect size to distribute electronically. For that reason, I plan to upload the index to America Online, CompuServe, GEnie and the Internet. Frank Sweetser informs me that several weeks after he receives Issue #6, he'll send me the completed index, and I'll upload it as soon as it's available.

At just about that same time, I anticipate that I'll be completing a second Shareware Solutions II archival project. I plan to re-create the listings of all the disks of freeware and shareware that have been available from the Shareware Solutions Library, going back to the inCider/A+ days. If nothing else, it will be convenient for people to have one single file that lists everything rather than having them look back through six issues of the newsletter.

The Index and Library Listing will, in addition to being uploaded, be placed on a disk that will be dubbed the "Shareware Solutions II Volume 1" disk. For those who cannot download the disk, it will be available from the Shareware Solutions II Library, on either 3.5" or 5.25" format, for the usual $5 fee. That disk should be available by the beginning of August, and certainly no later than mid-month. Let's all give Frank Sweetser a great big round of applause!

Hera – Sword of Rhin

Hera – The Sword of Rhin – was two years in the writing, and although the authors had attempted to get their game released as a commercial software product, they have just recently released it as shareware.

Hera is a colorful and interactive role playing adventure game that shares some similarities with the Ultima series. It has all the familiar trappings of games of that ilk, filled with wizards and dwarves, guards and kings, friends and foes. At the outset, you can choose to be a human or a dwarf, a warrior or a thief. Choosing what type of role you will play will define your character's attributes. After choosing who to be, you'll enter a wonderful world of adventure, filled with computerized beeps and animated graphics.

As you wander through strange and foreign lands, you'll try to talk to the natives to learn their secrets. You may find treasure galore, or you may be killed by some nasty town guards. Hopefully, you'll find maps to guide you on your way, and keys that will open town gates or treasure chests.

In the world of Hera, you'll explore castles and ruins, towns and villages. You'll travel through sweltering deserts and cross frozen wastelands. You'll meet nomads and monks, and visit Pirates Cove and Skull Mountain. Many scenes are animated, and you'll actually see the rippling of the waves.

Your objective is to talk to everyone you meet, battle the nasties that appear, get experience and hit points, and amass supplies and gold. Your overall goal is to kill the evil wizard Zarebae who lives deep inside Skull Mountain! But, to be successful in your quest, you're going to need all the help you can get.

You move around in Hera by using your arrow keys. The game uses standard keyboard commands, such as A for attack mode, I to check the inventory of goods you are carrying, T to talk to the natives, and U to unlock doors and gates. As the game starts, a screen appears that lists all of the commands.

Hera requires only 64K, and works on II+, IIe, IIc and IIGS systems. It runs under the DOS 3.3 operating system, and it is not hard drive installable. A shareware fee of $10 is payable directly to the author of the program. However, if you submit an $18 shareware fee, you'll receive a program manual and a player reference card by return mail.

Hera is available from the Shareware Solutions II library on a double sided 5.25" disk for $5.

Word Puzzles

Ed Oest, of Miramar, Florida has written two ProDOS 8 based programs that deserve a place in every classroom across the land, and in every home where there is a puzzle enthusiast. Crossword Assistant is a fabulously easy to use, menu driven program that creates elegant crossword puzzles from custom word lists that are supplied by the user of the program. Word Search Generator is a phenomenal program that creates a matrix filled with hidden words from a word list supplied by the user. Word Search puzzles, long a mainstay of elementary educators, have never been easier to create, or provided so much flexibility for the parent or teacher wanting to reinforce vocabulary.

Both programs sport an AppleWorks like interface. Both are completely menu driven and are supplied with sample puzzles on disk and excellent documentation supplied in AppleWorks format. Each program allows up to 80 words and clues per puzzle, and are capable of storing 50 different word lists or puzzles in a subdirectory on disk. Once the word list is supplied, the computer generates the completed puzzle on its own. Both programs require an Epson, an ImageWriter or an Epson-compatible printer, and both print out beautiful looking puzzles. Both programs work flawlessly on an Enhanced IIe or a IIGS; however, problems have been reported with both programs working on a IIc or IIc+. If you have an interest in solving or creating word based puzzles and use a IIe or IIGS, you'll be elated by these programs.

The Word Puzzles disk is available from the Shareware Solutions II library for $5. Please specify if you would like it on a double sided 5.25" disk or on a 3.5" disk.

Shareware Solutions IIGS

Nexus

Soon after Apple re-classified HyperCardIIGS as system software, a second IIGS hypermedia program followed suit, and Nexus is now currently available as Freeware.

Formerly available as a commercial software product costing $79.95, Nexus was originally released in 1990. It was picked as inCider/A+ Editor's Choice in August, 1990, and was described as being "better than Apple's HyperCard." A more complete review of Nexus appeared in the November, 1990 issue of inCider/A+, but despite the positive reviews, the Nexus hypermedia authoring system never seemed to be widely accepted by the Apple IIGS community, and sales were less than spectacular.

In the freeware distribution notes, Nexus' author Tracy Valleau states that the freeware Nexus is the "exact same commercial program that won rave reviews and an inCider/A+ Editor's Choice."

He goes on to describe the program by saying, "Nexus allows you to link together standard text, graphics and sound files. There is no need for you or your students to learn new graphic or authoring software: just use the files and programs you already have. Using Nexus, you can open a text document, click on the word "elephant" and Nexus will automatically retrieve and display a picture of an elephant (or more text about elephants, or play the sound of an elephant.) This is all done without importing the files, changing their format or even altering them in any way! Use it for interactive fiction; multimedia based education and so on. The limit is the imagination."

Nexus is a valuable addition to the IIGS hypermedia arena. It may not be as powerful as HyperCardIIGS, and it may not have as many bells and whistles as HyperStudio, but the price is right and its ease of use will make Nexus a powerful hypermedia contender in the schools.

In a general sense, Nexus has similarities to both HyperCardIIGS and HyperStudio. All three programs allow non-programmers to create non-linear interactive software with no programming skills required. In the strictest sense of the terms, Nexus could best be described as a HyperText program, whereas the others could best be described as full-blown HyperMedia programs. HyperStudio and HyperCardIIGS can both display animations and run other programs; Nexus can't. HyperStudio and HyperCardIIGS both contain a sophisticated programming language; Nexus doesn't. HyperStudio and HyperCardIIGS both contain an editor and powerful paint tools; Nexus doesn't.

Nexus does allow you to take any existing text file and to forge links between words in that text file with other text files, graphic files, or sound files. If the previous paragraph had been processed through Nexus, it could have been set up so that when users clicked on the word HyperCardIIGS, they would be shown a graphic of HyperCardIIGS' Home Stack, for example, or they would have been shown a review of HyperCardIIGS.

All that's missing from the Nexus freeware release is

printed documentation. There are, however, several help files included on the Nexus disk that many people will find to be more than adequate for them to get started using Nexus. The entire section of the program manual that describes how to use Nexus with Pioneer's LaserVision laser disk players is reproduced verbatim. Also, you'll find additional help files that describe how to use Nexus; they are located in the online help system that can be accessed from the Apple Pull Down Menu.

If you're already familiar with HyperStudio or HyperCard, or with the Internet's Lynx (which works remarkably similar to Nexus), the online help system may provide just enough information to help you to create your own Nexus documents. For those who are unfamiliar with hypermedia, the following exercise should help you get started with Nexus.

Start up your favorite word processing program and type, "You are standing before a building, and there are roads leading to the east and to the west." Save that file as a standard ASCII text file, and name it file One. Then, start a second word processing file, named Two, and type, "You are now on the road leading to the East." Then, start a third word processing file named Three, and type, "You are now on the road leading to the West." Save all three files to disk.

Then, start up your favorite paint program, such as AppleWorks GS or Platinum Paint, and if need be, switch the display mode to the 640 mode. Draw, or try to draw, a picture of a building. When completed, save the file as an Apple Preferred Format graphic, and name it file Four.

Now, you're ready to fire up Nexus by launching it from your IIGS System or Startup disk. From the file menu, choose the Open option, and when the standard file dialog box appears, open the file named One. Then, from the Link menu, choose the option to "Add Link." A rectangular cursor will appear, and place that cursor over the word "east" and double click with your mouse. When the Open file dialog box appears, just click on the file named Two, and you'll have just forged your first Nexus' linked file.

Then, again choose "Add Link" from the link menu and double click on the word "west." When the Open file dialog box appears, click on the file named Three. When you've forged that second link, it's time to link your graphic. So, select "Add Link" again, double click on the word skyscraper, and when the Open file dialog box appears, just click on the file named Four.

That's all it takes to create a Nexus document. Although very simplistic, the process is the same whether you're setting up a sample test document, or whether you are setting up an electronic database or converting classroom materials into Nexus format, using hundreds of different links. Using Nexus to view Nexus generated hypertext is even easier than setting up your own documents; that is covered in detail by Nexus' online help system.

If you have large amounts of text, imagine all that can be done to enhance and embellish that text using Nexus! To paraphrase Nexus' author, you're only limited by the imagination.

Nexus is supplied on a single 3.5" non-bootable disk. Nexus requires a IIGS with at least 1.25 megabytes of RAM, and it must be launched from IIGS System 5.0.2 or later.

Mr Valleau has stated that in order for any profit making organization to distribute Nexus, written permission must first be received from him. Mr Valleau has authorized Shareware Solutions II to distribute the Nexus program, and he has further authorized Shareware Solutions II to distribute a second disk that contains a Nexus demo that includes numerous sample Nexus linked files. The Nexus demo disk includes a version of Nexus that allows you to view Nexus documents but not create them.

The Nexus program disk is available from the Shareware Solutions II Library for $5. The Nexus demo disk is also available for $5. Or, you can get both for $8.

Foundation

Nexus has not been the only commercial program to be recently re-released as freeware. Through the diligent work of The Phoenix Project and the generosity of Marc Wolfgram of Lunar Productions, Foundation has also joined the freeware ranks.

Foundation is a resource editor that's a powerful tool for IIGS programmers and "power users." Several years ago, Apple introduced a new type of file format for GS/OS software. That new file format included both a data fork and a resource fork.

Resource forks can contain lots of different types of information, including the words that appear in Pull Down Menus, text that appears in the About Pull Down Menu, and the information that's displayed when the Finder's "Get Info" menu item is accessed. A resource editor allows you to change or alter those types of items, as well as many others. With the advent of System 6.0, even Finder Icons and sound files are stored in Resource forks of files, and Foundation can help you to alter, change or modify those types of files as well.

Foundation, however, is not yet a comprehensive resource editor for all types of resources. Even though you can use Foundation to change the pathname attributes contained within the invisible System 6 Desktop file, you can't actually alter the resource based rIcon that's displayed on your desktop. Not yet, at least.

Foundation does however have the ability to add additional user created resource editors, such as an rIcon editor or an rSound editor. Those don't currently exist, but they could be created and incorporated into Foundation. And, that's one of the major goals of the Foundation Project.

Eric Shepherd and Andy Wells, both programmers whose work has been written about in this newsletter, have agreed to coordinate a project whose goal is to get additional Foundation modules completed. With the Foundation source code also available as freeware, the last thing we need is 14 different rIcon editors, but it would be wonderful if we could get one solid bug-free Foundation based rIcon editor or rSound editor. So, Eric (who is a sysop on GEnie) and Andy (who is a sysop on America Online) have agreed to serve as a type of clearinghouse for new and improved Foundation modules and editors.

At the current time, the Foundation program, a Developer's Kit, and the complete Foundation source code in C and Pascal can be downloaded from America Online and from GEnie's A2Pro Round Table. There are also discussion areas on those two services where programmers can talk about their plans and ask questions. Mark Wolfgram, the author of Foundation, can be found in the Lunar Productions area on America Online.

For those who are modem-less, Shareware Solutions II is offering two Foundation disks. The Foundation Program disk contains the actual resource editor, the Developer Kit, and several samples. The Foundation Source Code disks contains all of the source code. Each of those disks is available for the usual $5 fee, or $8 for both.

Unfortunately, the Foundation User Documentation is not available at this time. If it ever does become available, it will be added to the Foundation Program disk, and will also become available as a low cost update for those who already have the Foundation freeware release.

Apollo 11

25 years ago, Neil Armstrong opened the hatch of the Apollo 11 Lunar Module, climbed down a short ladder, and spoke words that echoed across the far reaches of space and excited and inspired an entire planet: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Our world has changed since then, and travel in space has become almost routine. But, in 1969, Apollo 11 carried out the greatest scientific accomplishment imaginable when it carried two men to the surface of our nearest celestial neighbor.

Anyone who was alive then surely remembers the night of July 20, 1969 and probably remembers exactly where they were and who they were with. It was a memorable time indeed.

To commemorate the anniversary of the Apollo 11 moon landing, Shareware Solutions II has compiled a disk that contains scanned photographs, digitized sound files, text files and a HyperStudio stack. The photographs were taken by the crew of Apollo 11, and can be viewed by any IIGS paint program or graphic display utility. The three sound files include sound bytes from the surface of the moon, and a sound playback program is included to listen to them, or to convert them to the rSound format that's supported by System 6's Sound Control Panel. The text files provide an overview of the Apollo program, and the HyperStudio stack is about the mighty Saturn V launch vehicle. (You do not need to own HyperStudio to view the stack.)

The Apollo 11 Disk is available from the Shareware Solutions II library for $5.

Game Ten Pack

Over the past several months, I have downloaded a number of different IIGS game programs from the Internet, and I'd like to

share the best of those with you on the IIGS Game Ten Pack. This disk contains a real potpourri of games.

There are several strategy games that look similar at first glance. Collocation, a $7 shareware program by Benjamin Winnick, displays a pattern on screen, and has you attempting to recreate the pattern by pushing blocks with your mouse. It sounds easy, but there are quite a few nasties roaming the screen and causing havoc with your designs.

Shove It, freeware by Peter Binkley, is several years old, but has just recently been updated to be compatible with System 6. It's remarkably similar to Sokoban, where your goal is to navigate through a maze and to shove all the boxes you see off to the side. Included within the program is a total of 50 different maze puzzles, and there are some incredible features to this game. Foremost is that you can see an instant replay of your moves. You can also take a move back. As with all of Peter's freeware games, Shove It is a masterpiece.

From Down Under comes Pack Man, a $10 shareware game from Michael Rowe. Why he named it Pack Man is unknown; it's nothing like Pac Man. In fact, it's almost a clone of Shove It, which in turn is a clone of Sokoban. This version also has 50 levels, and you navigate through the mazes using your number pad, trying to shove all the objects off to the side. Again, this game only sounds easy. It's really a test of logic and object manipulation.

Two word games are also remarkably similar. Hang Man, by Mark and Jeff Sand, is the old familiar word guessing game. Included with the colorful freeware Hang Man is a 500 word dictionary that can be customized and added to. Guillotine, by Charles Hartley, is an update of an older public domain game by Doug Konitzer that was named Gallows. Guillotine is really a text screen version of Hang Man.

Another gift from Down Under is Tony Morton's freeware WireWorld. With WireWorld, there are no comparisons to other programs possible, as it's quite unique. It's like an electronic gizmo construction set, where you build circuitry and then watch the electricity flow through your circuit. It's quite lovely to look at, and should prove to be extremely popular with engineering students.

Another program from across the sea comes from Singapore. David Ong Tat-Wee refers to his GS Invaders program as a demo; I call it more of a work in progress. It's a clone of the all-time classic game of Space Invaders. Row upon row of enemy spacecraft are trying to destroy you and your world. At the outset, you'll have barriers to hide behind as you squeeze off shot after shot, trying to blast everything that moves. This game is quite wonderful; it's too bad that there's only one level.

Wiggle 1 and Wiggle 2 are from England's Richard King of Phoenix Project fame. They are both $5 shareware games, and 2 versions are supplied as you may prefer one over the other. Wiggle is a game similar to the old time game of Serpentine. You play the part of Willie the Worm, and you try to move around on the screen without backtracking or crossing paths. It's not that easy to describe, but after playing it for 2 seconds, you'll know exactly what has to be done.

Battleship GS is another freeware game from Mark and Jeff Sand. Part guessing game and part strategy game, this board game will have you trying to sink convoys of enemy battleships by choosing their invisible location from a grid.

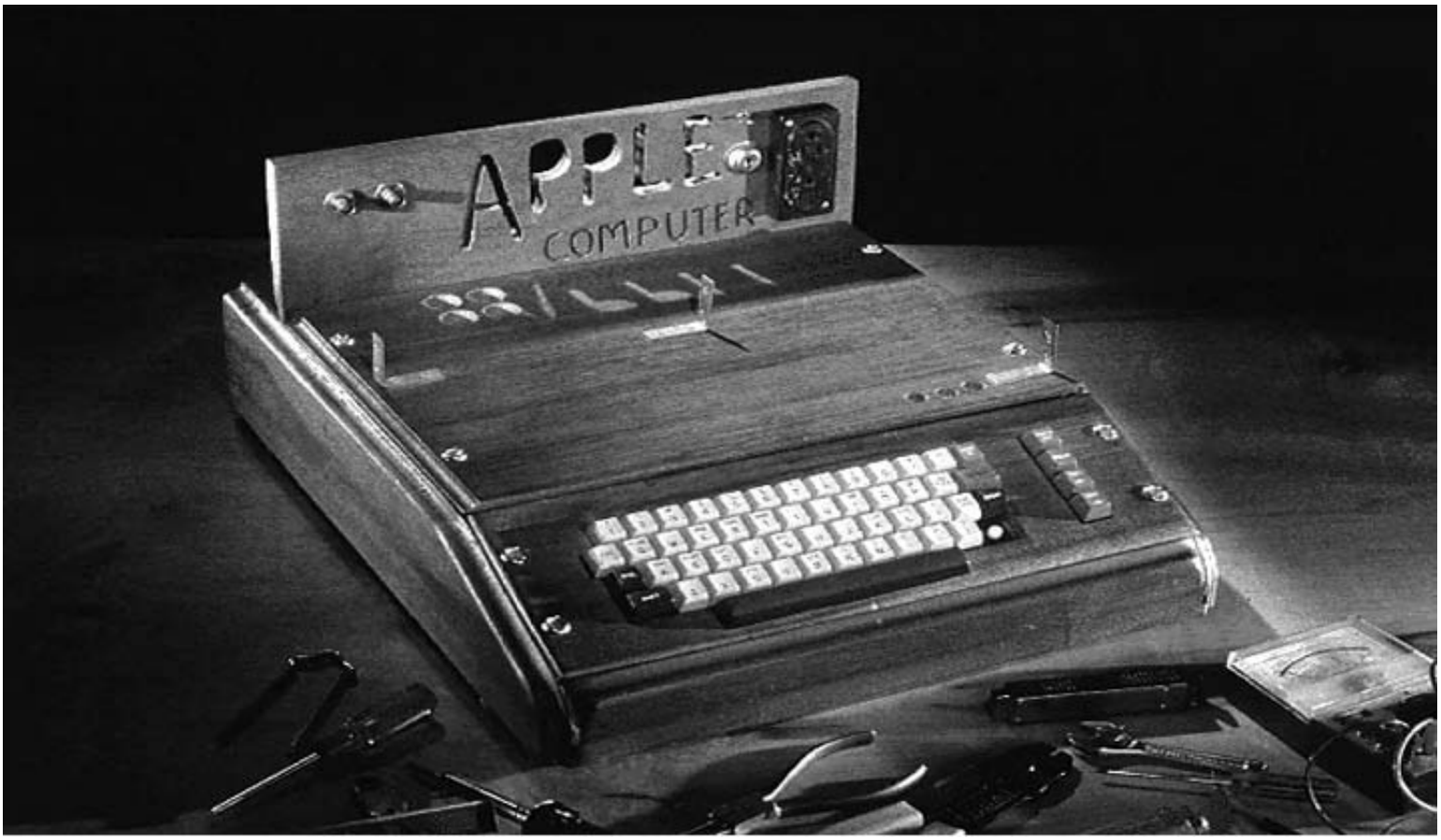
Rounding out the Game Ten Pack is MasterMind Plus, a freeware board game from Chris Haas. In this game, you have 15 chances to guess what colors and shapes comprise four on-screen patterns. Although very easy to play, this game is very difficult to win.

The Game Ten Pack disk is available from the Shareware Solutions II Library for $5.

Ordering Disks

When ordering disks from the Shareware Solutions II Library, please order by disk name and specify the disk size you want. All prices include shipping and handling. Please keep in mind that you are still obligated to submit shareware fees directly to the author of any shareware program that you like and continue to use after the initial evaluation period. Please honor the requests for submission of shareware fees, but don't feel obligated to pay shareware fees for software that you don't like.

Only checks or money orders, in US funds only, can be accepted for payment of disks from the library. Please make all checks payable to Joe Kohn.



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